

## OUR OCTOBER DEMONSTRATION

### *WHAT'S COOK'N GOOD LOOKIN'*

WITH MIKE MALECKI

How does one turn a spoon on the lathe? Well **Mike Malecki** showed how during his demonstration time on the treadle lathe at both the 2015 and 2016 New York State Fairs. After Mike demo'd in 2016, he left behind a completed spoon and a blank. When she discovered she was



missing her spoons, **Deidre** of the McCarthy's, the family singing group who performs outside the Witter Museum, asked the for help. **Don Lum** cleaned up the handle of the second blank and she used the combination of the two spoons for her performance.

Fast forward to the October 2016 club meeting. Mike demonstrated his technique for making shallow spoons – this time on the electric lathe – at the club meeting. A teacher by profession, Mike is very deliberate in his teaching style, spends just the right amount of time on his demonstration, and interacts well with the audience.



Spoons are one component of kitchen treen – a generic name for small handmade functional household objects made of wood. In June 2012, **John Lunney** demonstrated turning of various kitchen treen using techniques outlined in the book *Woodturning: Two Books in One – Projects to Practice and Inspire / Techniques to Adapt to Suit Your Own Designs* by Phil Irons.

When creating kitchen treen, one needs to think about the wood if the pieces are meant to be used rather than just decorative. Mike suggested making spoons from maple, birch, or other species that have closed grain so they do not absorb moisture during use in the kitchen. An example of a species that would NOT be good is red oak because of its open and porous grain structure.

Mike likes to create shallow spoons from  $\frac{3}{4}$ " or 1" thick hardwoods that are band saw cut around their outline – the silhouette of the handle and bowl of the spoon shape.



Make sure that the length of the handle will clear the swing of your lathe (measure from center of the spoon bowl to the end of the handle).

The spoon blank is put between centers on the lathe or centered



slightly low from the center points to make the handle lower than center when completed. Mike does most of his turning using a  $\frac{1}{2}$ " bowl or spindle gouge. Sand the handle before taking the spoon off the lathe. Mike

suggests cutting off any extra material on the end of the handle and the tip of the bowl on the spoon with a hand saw. Round out the edges of bowl area of the spoon and



more intensely shape and decorate the handle. The neck of the handle design Mike uses is only about a  $\frac{1}{4}$ "

to  $\frac{3}{8}$ " in diameter. The reason for this is when the bowl of the spoon is put into the chuck the space between the jaws is the how the neck allows the handle to spin outside the chuck.



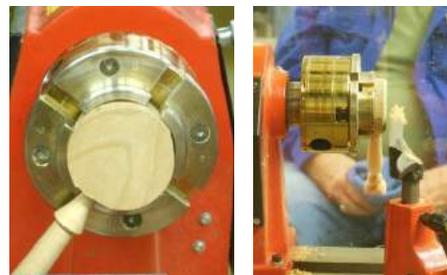
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Once the handle is complete, place the spoon blank into the chuck. See the photos to understand how the spoon is put into the chuck with the handle spinning outside the chuck and perpendicular to the bed of the lathe. It is also possible to remove one of the chuck jaws to allow the spoon handle to be wider – although it may be safer to remove the opposite jaw as well to keep the chuck balanced as it spins.

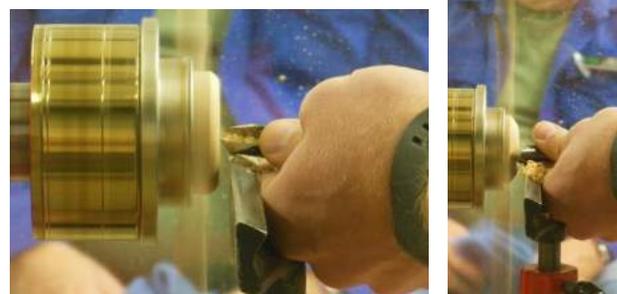


a long tool rest so that the handle spins behind the tool rest and keep your fingers in front of the tool rest, says Mike *with a chuckle*. Sand the inside of the scoop.

Shaping the back



Shaping the bowl



Then carefully turn the spoon around in the chuck and shape as much of the back of the bowl area of the spoon as possible without cutting into the neck of the handle.

Remove the spoon from the lathe and continue sanding the bowl of the spoon by machine or by hand until you create the spoon shape you want to achieve. Hardwoods do not need to have a finish applied, especially if they are used in hot, wet foods such as stirring a pot while cooking. Mike says his chili is best when stirred with a wooden spoon.



Write up Submitted by **Chad Dawson & Barbara Raymond-LaPrease**  
Photos on by **Barbara Raymond-LaPrease**

When turning the inside of the bowl area of the spoon use, Mike uses a bowl gouge or round nose scrapper. Use

## OCTOBER SATURDAY WORKSHOP

The October Saturday workshop was held at **Eight Acres**. Most who attended turned spoons based on Mike Malecki's excellent demo at the meeting. We also had a couple new folks get some basic turning training. Thanks to all who helped as mentors at this event. It

really helps to have additional hands available! Here are some photos of the morning.

**NOTE: Experienced turners are always needed at workshops to help others.**

***The mentors do not pay for the workshop unless they take supplied materials.***

